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SUBJECT: SRSG KAI EIDE BRIEFS THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON
AFGHANISTAN

¶1. (U) Summary: SRSG and head of the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) Kai Eide briefed the Security Council on October 14, leading off a nearly four-hour meeting on Afghanistan. Eide cautioned against "doom and gloom" statements and said there were promising trends in the conflict. He also said that the UN's relationship with ISAF was better than it was a half-year ago. Eide's caution against overly negative statements was strongly supported by the U.S. and allies in the Council. Generally, countries gave nuanced views of the situation in Afghanistan - deploring violence and expressing concern regarding civilian casualties, but noting as well recent positive trends and the need to stay the course. Many also emphasized good governance and development as equally important as security. In his concluding remarks to the Council, Eide said he welcomed the broad consensus to support UNAMA and to redouble commitments to assist Afghanistan. He noted that Council members had voted to give UNAMA a generous mandate, but that the General Assembly was more reluctant to give UNAMA equally generous resources. End summary.

SRSG EIDE,S INTERVENTION

¶2. (U) Eide began by saying that because of the deteriorating security situation, the international community has been "distracted from the commitments undertaken in Paris." He cautioned against "doom and gloom" statements, and said there were three areas of positive trends: an improved relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan, recent changes in the Afghanistan government, and a decrease in the overall production of drugs. Eide also noted that UNAMA's relationship with ISAF was better than it was half a year ago. He underscored the importance of a "clear and independent United Nations voice" on human rights issues, and added that civil-military cooperation has led to an "integrated approach under civilian lead." Regarding the notion of an integrated and comprehensive approach, Eide warned against allocating civilian resources only in conflict provinces and in support of military operations. Success of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy requires a "balanced and equitable distribution of resources," said Eide.

¶3. (U) Eide listed eight tasks achievable within six months for UNAMA and the international community: 1) to agree with donors on specific criteria to measure aid effectiveness; 2) to establish a database to allow the Afghan government and the UN to track resources, whether spent through PRTs, development agencies or NGOs; 3) to set up a mechanism for joint audits; 4) to strengthen Government institutions against corruption; 5) to agree on a plan for "what kind of police we want"; 6) to implement the Afghanistan Social Outreach Programme; 7) to develop a design for agricultural reform; and 8) to solidify the Afghanistan/Pakistan relationship in a wider, confidence-building regional framework. He concluded by welcoming the Council's broad consensus to support UNAMA and to redouble commitments to assist Afghanistan. He pointedly noted that Council members had voted to give UNAMA a generous mandate, but that the

General Assembly was more reluctant to give UNAMA equally generous resources.

COUNCIL MEMBERS REACT

¶4. (U) Council members reiterated similar themes: concern regarding the security situation and civilian casualties, and broad support for Eide and UNAMA. Italy emphasized the importance of the Pakistan/Afghanistan relationship, and noted it would likely seek a Ministerial on this issue when it assumes the G8 Presidency next year. Belgium, Indonesia, the UK, France and others emphasized the importance of development and good governance as key pillars along with security. The U.S. and France also reiterated their unwavering commitment to Afghanistan, and agreed with Eide's caution against "gloom and doom" statements. Russia cautioned against any reconciliation with high-level extremists, and urged ISAF to focus more on counter-narcotics efforts. China emphasized upcoming elections, and along with Libya urged greater focus on national reconciliation.

AFGHANISTAN, ISAF CONTRIBUTORS, NEIGHBORS REACT

¶5. (U) Afghanistan PermRep Zahir Tanin forcefully agreed with Eide's admonition against overly negative statements. He also supported Eide's idea of a "political surge" to refocus attention on political/civilian efforts. Japan, the Netherlands, Germany and Norway emphasized the importance of following up on commitments made at the Paris Conference, and underscored their countries' continued involvement in Afghanistan. Pakistan gave an extended intervention defending its internal actions to combat extremists, and

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accused the UN of a "myopic" view of the cross-border issue. The Pakistan government is following a "holistic strategy against extremism and terrorism, employing political dialogue and socio-economic measures, but retaining the option to use force..." Iran and India implicitly criticized Pakistan's decision to use political dialogues. Iran stated "the recent increase in insecurity in Afghanistan well suggests that the attempts made to appease some extremist and terrorist groups by certain countries have been counterproductive and have only emboldened them."

CIVILIAN CASUALTIES

¶6. (SBU) All countries expressed concern regarding civilian casualties, although most also noted that these came largely because of asymmetric attacks by the Taliban and al-Qaida. Russia, South Africa and Indonesia were less vocal on this issue than during the negotiations extending the mandate of ISAF, and called for respect of international humanitarian and human rights law. Libya was harshest in its criticism of ISAF, while the Afghanistan PermRep said blame should be on the Taliban, not ISAF. India expressed its concern regarding efforts to accord terrorists "parity with the forces of order." Furthermore, India said civilian casualties were distressing, but that "ultimate responsibility for such casualties must be laid at the door of the Taliban, al-Qaida, and those who support and empower them." (Comment: India's statement was filled with similar indirect references to Pakistan. End comment)
Wolff